DOMINION ELECTIONS, 1887.

ADDRESS

OF

DONALD MACMASTER,

(QUEEN'S COUNSEL)

TO THE ELECTORS OF GLENGARRY.

To the Free and Intelligent Electors of Glengarry :

Gentlemen :—

For some years I have had the honour of being your representative in Parliament, and I have been asked by a very large number of the people to be again a candidate for the representation of the county.

I would have been quite willing, with the consent of my many friends, to see any other of the many respectable men in the county nominated in my stead, and to use all my humble influence to secure the return of the one who was the choice of the greatest number. But two circumstances prevented this: my friends wished that I should be the candidate, and my enemies very plainly intimated that I was to be kicked out.

If there was anything more powerful than the demand of my friends that I should be the candidate, it was the threat of my enemies. The two influences determined me to enter upon this contest and make it hot for the kickers. I must do them the justice to say that since the campaign opened I have not seen many of them around, though I am informed that they are industriously and courageously attacking me behind my back.

In order to settle some little outstanding accounts between my accusers and myself, I, at the beginning of the compaign, sent a formal notice to my opponent (of which I enclose a copy) inviting him to come to an arrangement with me to hold joint meetings, in order that the candidates might face to face discuss the public questions of the day before you—the grand jurors of the county—and that you might be spared the trouble and the infliction of attending two sets of political meetings. A ghastly silence has been the only response to this invitation. To this moment my loud-mouthed accusers have not dared to meet me in fair and open fight. Need I say that there is a sense of fair-play among the people that condemns the arts of the slanderer and the liar; and that cowardice has no favour in the eyes of the sons and daughters of Glengarry.

You all know my record while in public life, and many of you know me well in private life. I am not a believer in professions of political sinlessness. There is not now, and never will be, a perfect Government. The frailties of individual men will be reflected in any combination of men. What is needful in the National Executive is what Sir Walter Scott called the "Divine right of man. The wit to plan and the strength to execute." The old Novelist crushed all political philosophy on this subject into one short sentence.

Under our free institutions it is the people who rule. But as every man cannot take his place at the council board of the nation, he exercises the valued privilege of casting his vote for the man he thinks worthy to represent him there. From the men thus chosen, a few are selected who constitute the Administation—and these, with the assistance of their supporters, propound a policy for the Government of the country.

I am free to confess that I conscientiously believe the National Policy, planned and executed by the Government of the Right Honourable Sir John Macdonald, is not only for the temporary but for the permanent benefit of this country. Under it an era of prosperity and national developement has commenced which I sincerely believe is but a mile-stone in the march of progress upon which our people have set out.

For this reason I have supported that policy. But I wish distinctly to say to you that I am not the bond-slave of Sir John Macdonad or of any member of his Government, and that I would not accept any position in life in which I could not within reasonable bounds exercise my own judgment as to how I should discharge my duty.

My first duty is to the people who appoint me by their votes to represent them. I have endeavored in the past to discharge that duty. If you conscientiously think I am not able or worthy to represent you, then you should reject me. But if, on the other hand, you think I have honestly tried, according to the best of my ability and opportunities, to represent you, I appeal to your sense of fair-play to see that justice is done me in the contest in which I am now engaged. I have no reason to doubt that you will. I see the old and warm friends to whom I am indebted for so many favours enthusiastic and active in my behalf.

I see the young men whose hearts are not poisoned by political malice —now casting their first votes—vigorously working in support of my candidature. I see men of the highest place and station among you, whose ability and character have gained your respect, giving me on personal grounds their prudent counsel and generous support, though their votes and political sympathies in the past have been in opposition to me. And better still, I meet in your homes—and there is no home in Glengarry where I am not kindly welcomed—greetings and good wishes that come from true and pure hearts. Surely these forces work for good.

I am deeply sensible of the obligations such support implies and if elected I feel that a battle fought on such lines means something more than a mere political tussle, and that I am bound to consider and respect the honest sentiments of those who have combined to secure my success.

I wish I were more worthy of the great confidence I see on every side. I regret I can never make any sufficient return to those who at much personal inconvenience are freely devoting their time and best efforts in support of my candidature.

The honor-roll of Glengarry's distinguished representatives has been and ever shall be dear to me, and I have felt a pride that you will pardon, in being an humble member in a line of Canadian representatives that has no equal in our country's history.

Wherever I have been I have felt proud of the sons and daughters of Glengarry, among whom and with whom I have spent the happiest days of my life. The very fields, trees, roads, hills and shores of the old county, speak to me in a language that recalls the past, and of associations and friendships that went to make me what little I am.

The very name of the county is to me a password of honour, and I have never heard the word "Glengarry" uttered without an ever fresh consciousness of pride at being born and brought up within its bounds.

I do not desire unduly to press my candidature upon you; but if it is your pleasure to grant me a continuance of your generous confidence I shall regard it as the greatest honour that could be conferred upon me, and if my life is spared it is my hope and will be my endeavour to restore to you the honoured credentials of the county as stainless as I received then,

I have the honour to be,
Gentlemen,
Your obedient and faithful servant,

DONALD MACMASTER.

Williamstown, Feb. 14th, 1887.